

The Tennessee Grow Your Own Center

Tennessee is the first state in the country to sponsor Teacher Occupation Apprenticeship programs between school districts and Educator Preparation Providers (EPPs). Tennessee's Teacher Apprenticeship model aligns leading practices in teacher preparation and development with the rigors of the national registered apprenticeship process.

Investment in Statewide Educator Preparation and Recruitment

In May 2022, the Tennessee Department of Education announced a \$20M investment in the University of Tennessee System to create the Tennessee Grow Your Own (GYO) Center. With a presence in every county and multiple campus locations, the University of Tennessee System will leverage the university's reach to attract more aspiring educators to the profession. The GYO Center will develop an innovative EPP program for educator credentialing, additional endorsements, and professional development that reimagines coursework and content across entry points.

Purpose of the GYO Center

The Tennessee GYO Center will serve as the lead provider for new educator preparation opportunities to scale in - and beyond - the state. The center supports greater statewide access and opportunity for future educators to pursue innovative workforce pathway opportunities, at minimal or no cost to candidates. The center's work will support an increase in the statewide Educator Preparation Provider (EPP) enrollment, developing future educators and leaders to better support the students and state of Tennessee.



Strengthening the educator pipeline





Programmatic Supports Through the Tennessee GYO Center

Though the center's supports will evolve with time and need, primary program operations will include:

- 1. Lead technical assistance hub for Teacher Apprenticeship models.** The center will support program questions, both for aspiring educators and future programs. Serving current educators, future candidates, new LEA/EPP partnerships, current LEA/EPP partnerships, and stakeholders outside of the state, the Tennessee GYO Center will operate as the one-stop-shop for programmatic support and technical assistance.
- 2. Develop and recruit candidates.** The University of Tennessee System will operate as an EPP program administrator themselves. Leveraging multiple campuses and coursework, the UT System will operate as a statewide EPP apprenticeship partner for districts to choose to enroll their candidates with.
- 3. Provide additional endorsements and generate new leadership pathway models.** The center will offer numerous options for current educators to pursue a SPED and ESL endorsement or credentialed leadership pathway, at no-cost to the candidate or district.

What role does the Tennessee Department of Education maintain?

The department will continue to set strategy and vision for the state's educator priorities, ensuring ultimate alignment and cohesion for high-quality programming across Tennessee. Additionally, the department will continue to operate as the sponsor for all Teacher Apprenticeship programs, reviewing applications and monitoring program quality.

In turn, the center will primarily support the design and creation of new apprenticeship programs, serving as the lead technical assistance hub and connector for school district/EPP partnerships. Additionally, the center will continue to pursue innovative strategies for educator development, financial assistance opportunities, and leadership development – both for current and future educators.